AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-49: Cancel.

Claim 50 (new): A guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending axis, and terminating at one end in a proximal portion, and at an opposite end in a distal portion for accessing the remote site, the distal portion terminating adjacent a distal end thereof in a guide portion, the guide portion being adapted to be shaped to a desired curved configuration for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, characterized in that a reinforcing means is provided on the distal portion for minimizing axial twisting of the distal portion between a proximal end of the distal portion and the guide portion thereof.

Claim 51 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 50 characterized in that the reinforcing means is an elongated reinforcing means having a proximal end and a distal end, and preferably, the reinforcing means extends along at least a portion of the distal portion between the proximal end of the distal portion and the guide portion, and advantageously, the distal end of the reinforcing means is spaced apart from the distal end of the distal portion of the guide wire and defines with the distal end of the distal portion of the guide wire the guide portion thereof.

Claim 52 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 51 characterized in that the reinforcing means extends from the proximal end of the distal portion, and preferably, the proximal end of the reinforcing means substantially coincides with the proximal end of the distal portion of the guide wire, and preferably, the reinforcing means extends in a generally axial direction.

Claim 53 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 51 characterized in that the distal portion of the guide wire defines a longitudinally extending flat surface, and the reinforcing means extends along the flat surface and from the flat surface terminating in a longitudinally extending edge.

Claim 54 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 53 characterized in that the distal portion of the guide wire is of rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of opposite major flat surfaces, joined by a pair of opposite minor surfaces, the major flat surfaces defining a central major plane located midway between the major surfaces, and the minor surfaces defining a central minor plane located midway between the minor surfaces, and advantageously, the reinforcing means is located on one of the major flat surfaces.

Claim 55 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 54 characterized in that the reinforcing means is located on both of the major flat surfaces, and preferably, the respective major flat surfaces converge towards each other towards the distal end of the distal portion.

Claim 56 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 54 characterized in that the transverse distance of the longitudinally extending edge of each reinforcing means from the central major plane is substantially constant along the reinforcing means.

Claim 57 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 54 characterized in that each reinforcing means extends parallel to the central minor plane, and preferably, each reinforcing means coincides with the central minor plane.

Claim 58 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 54 characterized in that each reinforcing means extends at an angle greater than zero degrees to the central minor plane, and preferably, each reinforcing means extends adjacent one of the minor surfaces, and preferably, one reinforcing means extends from each of the major flat surfaces, one of the reinforcing means extending adjacent one of the minor surfaces, and the other reinforcing means extending adjacent the other minor surface.

Claim 59 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 51 characterized in that each reinforcing means comprises an elongated reinforcing member, and preferably, each reinforcing

member defines opposite longitudinally extending sides, and preferably, the opposite longitudinally extending sides of each reinforcing member terminate along the longitudinally extending edge thereof.

Claim 60 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 59 characterized in that the opposite longitudinally extending sides of each reinforcing member are parallel to each other, or alternatively, the opposite longitudinally extending sides of each reinforcing member converge towards the longitudinally extending edge thereof for defining the longitudinally extending edge as a longitudinally extending ridge, and preferably, the longitudinally extending edge of each reinforcing member converges towards the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the reinforcing member.

Claim 61 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 50 characterized in that each reinforcing means is integrally formed with the distal portion, and each reinforcing means and the distal portion are of metal and may be formed by forging from a single piece of metal, or by rolling from a single piece of metal.

Claim 62 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 50 characterized in that the distal portion of the guide wire extends through a sleeve, and a first securing means at the distal end thereof secures the distal portion to the sleeve, the first securing means defining the distal end of the guide wire.

Claim 63 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 62 characterized in that the first securing means is shaped to form a dome shaped distal end for facilitating passage of the guide wire smoothly through a vessel of the subject.

Claim 64 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 62 characterized in that the guide portion is located between each reinforcing means and the first securing means.

Claim 65 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 62 characterized in that the first securing means comprises one of a solder joint, an adhesive joint, or a brazed joint.

Claim 66 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 62 characterized in that the sleeve extends beyond the proximal end of the distal portion along a portion of the guide wire, and preferably, a proximal end of the sleeve is secured to the guide wire by a second securing means, and the second securing means may comprise one of an adhesive joint, a solder joint, or a brazed joint, and advantageously, the sleeve is secured to the guide wire at at least one intermediate location intermediate the proximal end and the distal end of the sleeve by an intermediate securing means, and preferably, the intermediate securing means comprises one of an adhesive joint, a solder joint, or a brazed joint, and advantageously, at least a portion of the sleeve adjacent the distal end thereof is of a radiopaque material, and preferably, the sleeve comprises a tightly wound coiled spring of a metal material, or a tubular member, which

preferably, is of plastics material, or alternatively, the sleeve is formed from alternate portions of the tightly wound coiled spring and the tubular member, and preferably, at least a portion of the sleeve is formed from one or more of the following materials or alloys thereof:

platinum,

gold,

tantalum.

Claim 67 (new): A guide wire as claimed in Claim 50 characterized in that the guide wire is substantially torsionally rigid between the distal portion and the proximal portion of the guide wire for minimizing axial twisting of the guide wire between the proximal portion thereof and the guide portion, and preferably, a portion of the guide wire adjacent the distal portion thereof tapers towards the distal portion, and advantageously, the distal portion of the guide wire and the guide wire are integrally formed from one piece of material.

Claim 68 (new): A distal portion for a guide wire of the type for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending axis, and the distal portion having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the distal portion being adapted for securing to the guide wire, the distal portion terminating in a guide portion adjacent the distal end thereof, the guide portion being adapted to be shaped to a desired curved configuration for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, characterized in that a reinforcing means is provided

on the distal portion for minimizing axial twisting of the distal portion between a proximal end of the distal portion and the guide portion thereof.

Claim 69 (new): In combination a catheter and the guide wire as claimed in Claim 50.